— Highlight the plight of the girl child and stress the need for Universalisation of elementary education as a way of addressing the issue.

Besides, the District Primary Education Programme launched in 1994 has a marked gender focus; and the districts selected for coverage under the programme are pre-dominantly low female literacy districts.

Illiteracy among Women

989. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 32% of women in India are illiterate;

(b) whether most of these women are in the rural areas; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to eradicate this level of illiteracy and in what time frame?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD PATIL): (a) According to 1991 Census the female illiteracy rate was 60.71%. As per the 53rd round survey on literacy conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation ending 1997, the illiteracy rate of women was 50%.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Total Literacy Campaigns launched by the National Literacy Mission have laid special emphasis on women's mobilisation and participation, particularly in areas with low female literacy. The literacy campaigns aim at creating an environment where women demand knowledge and information. The campaigns make use of a variety of media to spread the message that education of women is a pre-condition for improving their status in society. Gender issues have been suitably incorporated in the literacy primers. Out of the approximately 80 million persons made literate through literacy campaigns so far, approximately 48 million

are women. The National Literacy Mission aims at imparting functional literacy to threshold, sustainable level of 75% by the year 2005.

Expenditure on Adult Education Programme

990. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) how long Government propose to continue the Adult Education Programme; and

(b) the amount spent on this programme during the last three years and with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD PATIL): (a) Government has approved the continuation of the National Literacy Mission and its schemes during the Ninth Five Year Plan. The goal of the National Literacy Mission is to attain a sustainable threshold level of literacy (75%) by 2005.

(b) An amount of Rs. 255.08 crores has been incurred on this programme during the last three years. Literacy rate has been going up at the rate of approximately 1.8% every year as per the survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (53rd round).

Notification of Fake Universities

991. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are causes for the delay in notifying, only 15 fake Universities, while about 50 such institutions are under investigation;

(b) whether Government are aware that career and prospects of a large number of innocent students are endangered by the activities of such fake Universities; and

(c) if so, what effective steps have been taken by Government to create wider awareness among students and to check the educational menace?